

FACULTY OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

OPERA DIVISION

presents :

Maria Egiziaca
by Ottorino Respighi

Prima Donna
by Arthur Benjamin

IN: MACMILLAN THEATRE
EDWARD JOHNSON BUILDING

NOVEMBER 25, 27 (*mat.*), 29, DECEMBER 1, 3 1983

THE OPERA DIVISION

presents

MARIA EGIZIACA

(Mary of Egypt)

by

OTTORINO RESPIGHI*

Text of Claudio Guastalla

CONDUCTOR	James Craig (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) John Greer (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
DIRECTOR	Michael Albano
SET DESIGNER	Douglas McLean
COSTUME DESIGNER	Diane McCann-Davis
LIGHTING DESIGNER	Robert Thomson

Cast in Order of Appearance

A Sailor	Gary Rideout (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Stephen McClare (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
Maria	Martha Collins (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Ingrid Attrot (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
A Pilgrim	David Budgell (Nov. 25, Dec. 1) Patrick Timney (Nov. 27, 29, Dec. 3)
A Beggar	Anne McWatt (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Gabrielle Prata (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
A Leper	Daniel Stainton (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Edward Franko (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
A Blind Woman	Halyna Dytyniak (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Helen Marchand (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
A Celestial Voice	Sung Ha Shin (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Sharon Crowther (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)

Members of the Chorus

Linda Bennett, Adreana Braun, Lawrence Cotton, D. Bruce Dennis,
Robert Dirstein, Ruth Forster, Lisa Gaasenbeek, Nicholas Groenewegen,
Francine Himelfarb, Jay Lambie, Carole Ann Latimer, Angelique Leydier,
Linda Osborne, Alison Pybus, Emilio Roman, Christine Sawicki, Teresa
Sirek, Jacqueline Tracey, Sheila Wills, Mark Wilson, Louise van Winkle

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MARIA EGIZIACA (Mary of Egypt)

On March 9, 1932 Ottorino Respighi gave an interview to the New York Times in regard to the forthcoming premiere (Carnegie Hall - March 16, 1932) of his 'Trittico Per Concerto' (Tryptych for a Concert), MARIA EGIZIACA (Mary of Egypt). The composer stated that the work was neither opera nor oratorio in form but was derived from the early mystery plays of the middle ages. He and his poet-librettist, Claudio Guastalla, have drawn their inspiration from the legend of the fourth century saint, Mary of Egypt, a beautiful courtesan of Alexandria, who through divine intervention was turned from a life of sin and granted absolution after forty-eight penitent years in the desert. The legend has had a remarkable diffusion and popularity in the East. In its developed form it seems to have been the composition of St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who died in 638 A.D. Respighi has approached the work episodically concentrating on the three major elements of Maria's life - her calling to faith, the miraculous circumstances of her conversion and her death.

FIRST TABLEAU

In the harbour of Alexandria a sailor sings disconsolately of his longing for the open sea. Maria, weary of her purposeless and dissolute life questions him as to the destination of his ship and begs to be allowed on board. The sailor is momentarily noncommittal and the conversation is interrupted by the arrival of a pilgrim and a group of followers. Maria asks if she might be allowed to join the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The pilgrim replies that if she can pay for her passage, she will be allowed on board. Maria, sensing that the holy man is aware of her true nature, boldly states that she is able to make her own kind of payment. The pilgrim, outraged by her lack of shame, cautions the sailor that evil is upon them. Overcome by the woman's seductive charm, the sailor disregards the warning and Maria joyfully boards the ship.

SECOND TABLEAU

A beggar woman and a leper approach a temple in the hope that their miseries may be lessened by the strength of their faith. As they enter the temple, Maria is led to the steps by a blind woman. With the remarkable intuition of the sightless, the woman expresses the hope that God "will take every evil" from Maria. As she is about to enter the holy place, Maria is again confronted by the pilgrim who denounces her as unworthy and tells her that only after years of repentance will she receive divine grace. Although intimidated by his terrible utterances, Maria is sure that God will open the holy portals to all. When she tries again to enter, she is tormented by demonic visions activated by her own guilt. In a final act of humility, she kisses the threshold of the temple and begs God for a sign of spiritual guidance. The voice of an angel tells her that ultimate redemption will be hers when she has cleansed herself in the holy river and found a hermitage beyond. As a tangible sign of favour, the doors of the temple open and Maria enters.

THIRD TABLEAU

The passage of many years finds the pilgrim living in seclusion. He regards the sight of an open grave in the distance as symbolic of his approaching death. Maria, aged and exhausted, has finally found the hermitage. For the third time in Maria's life, the pilgrim is instrumental in her destiny. As she dies in his arms, the holy man grants her absolution.

THE OPERA DIVISION

presents

PRIMA DONNA

by

ARTHUR BENJAMIN*

Text by Cedric Cliffe

CONDUCTOR	Michael Evans
DIRECTOR	Michael Albano
SET DESIGNER	Douglas McLean
COSTUME DESIGNER	Diane McCann-Davis
LIGHTING DESIGNER	Robert Thomson
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR	John Greer

Cast in Order of Appearance

FLORINDO, a Venetian gentleman	Peter Barnes (Nov. 25, 27, Dec. 1) David Budgell (Nov. 29, Dec. 3)
BELLINA, his maid	Kimberly Barber (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Debra Selig (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
ALCINO, his friend	Robert Hanks (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Lenard Whiting (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
OLIMPIA, of the Opera Chorus	Alison Watson (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Jamie MacKinnon (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
FIAMMETTA, of the Opera Chorus	Deborah Stevens (Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 1) Lisa Sullivan (Nov. 27, Dec. 3)
THE COUNT, Florindo's uncle	Ronald Haney** (Nov. 25, 27, 29, Dec. 1) Dec. 3)
Maid to Olimpia	Gabrielle Prata
Maid to Fiammetta	Linda Bennett
A Gondolier	Emilio Roman
A Caterer	Jay Lambie
His Assistants	Lawrence Cotton Angelique Leydier Louise van Winkle Mark Wilson

The action takes place on the terrace of Florindo's house in Venice at the turn of the century

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** Graduate

PRIMA DONNA

Since the very inception of opera, temperment - or plain bad temper - has played a starring role. Bellicose prime donne, in particular, have maddened composers, conductors and colleagues while invariably delighting the public. The shenanigans of Faustina and Cuzzoni drove Handel to such a state of fury that he threatened to hurl one of the warring songbirds from a window. Years later during a curtain call at the Metropolitan Opera - always a dangerous moment - Johanna Gadschi managed to draw, with no little vigour, the ample flesh of Olive Fremstad's forearm across the nail-encrusted breastplate of her Brünnhilde costume. "Yankee Diva", Lillian Nordica, uncomfortably passing time in Bayreuth before her debut as Elsa in the shrine's first LOHENGRIN, timorously approached the mighty Lilli Lehmann as to when she might call and pay the proper respects. The doyenne of German opera coolly informed the young American that she was "not taking pupils that season". In our time, the real or imagined feud between Callas and Tebaldi had press and public at fever pitch while box-offices everywhere went under seige.

Arthur Benjamin's opera, *PRIMA DONNA* (London - 1949) suggests that even the less-celebrated ladies of the opera chorus are not slow to emulate their betters.

ORCHESTRA

(Members of the University of Toronto Symphony)

FIRST VIOLIN

Jayne Maddison
(Concert Master)
Paul Zevenhuizen
Janie Kim
Lise Boutin
Peter Visentin
Michael Sproule
Vicky Dvorak
Holly Larson
Marie- Andrée Demers
Anita Buttemer

VIOLINCELLO

Luis Sarda (Principal)
Daralis Collins
Sandra Wells
Mark Chambers
Sonja de Langen

HORN

James Sommerville*
Mary Lee**
Janet Parker
Neil Spaulding

DOUBLE BASS

Tracy Mortimore (Principal)
Jeremy Webster
Paul Langley
Richard Walters
Louis Garson

TRUMPET

Mary Jay*
Craig Penrose**

SECOND VIOLIN

David Visentin (Principal)
Nancy Gibson
Anders Norberg
Sarah Newham
Marc Sabat
Lawrence Beckwith
Nicole Zarry
Elizabeth Alfrod

FLUTE

Dianne Aitken*
Suzanne Takahashi**

BASS TROMBONE

Robert Houghton

OBOE

Peter Voisey*
Martin Houtman**

TUBA

Bruce Alcock

VIOLA

Linda Umbrico (Principal)
Rena De Coursey
Ross Daly
Fiona Walsh
Mary McGeer
Anya Aide

CLARINET

Marc Becker*
Don Ross**

TIMPANI

Bill Brennan

BASSOON

Don Shore*
Edith Stacey**

PERCUSSION

John Thompson
Joseph Cordi

PIANOFORTE & CELESTE

Stephen Ralls

STAGE ENSEMBLE IN

PRIMA DONNA

Violin - Bob Bruyn
Viola - Rifat Qureshi
Violoncello - Norman Franke
Flute - David Gerry
Guitar - René Gély

* Principal for MARIA EGIZIACA

** Principal for PRIMA DONNA

- OPERA DIVISION -

CO-ORDINATOR
MUSICAL DIRECTOR
HEAD COACH & CONDUCTOR
MUSIC STAFF
MUSICAL ASSISTANT
STAGE DIRECTORS
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Michael Albano
James Craig
Michael Evans
George Brough, John Greer, Stephen Ralls
Julia Iacono
Michael Albano, Constance Fisher
Freda Chayka

PRODUCTION STAFF

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/
PRODUCTION MANAGER
STAGE MANAGER
ASSISTANT TO THE
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
CARPENTERS

Fred Perruzza
Susan Monis*

SCENIC ARTIST
ASSISTED BY
STATUES BY

David Macdonell
Margot Sim*
Howard Thornley, William Ayres,
Michael Switzer, John Allen
Edward Kotanen
William Schmuk, Denise Lisson
John Leberg, Frank Brandish-Holtz,
Glen Elliot, Gary Nokes, Kevin Mapson
Howard Thornley

LIGHTING BOARD OPERATOR
ASSISTANT TO LIGHTING
DESIGNER
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Craig Blackley
Don Leberge, Theresa Buckley,
Kathy Layne, Bill Tomlinson
Daniel Brown, Don Leberge, Ray Marshall,
Rick Marshall, Joanne Norman, Mike Sardine,
Michael Shaw, Barbara Rogers

STAGE CREW

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR
ASSISTANT TO THE
WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

Diane McCann-Davis

Sue Murphy

MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR
ASSISTED BY

Jack Medhurst
Jeanne Armstrong, Janice McGovern,
Maite Schenk, Sherry van Dyk,
Leslie Whittaker

WIG MISTRESS

Fina Khan

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

Canadian Opera Company, Canadian Opera Guild (London Branch), Canadian Opera Guild (Oakville Branch), Canadian Opera Guild (Peel Branch), Canadian Opera Women's Committee, Warren Hughes (Costume House), The Rotary Club of Toronto (Armour Heights), Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

The Opera Division wishes to thank Mr. Robert W. H. Binnie for his generous contribution towards the production costs of these operas.

In the past years the Faculty of Music has presented to the community a rich variety of concerts, recitals, lectures and opera productions. Many of these are offered free of charge; ticket prices for the rest are kept as low as possible and do not begin to cover the actual costs.

As we present the 1983-4 season and plan the next, we are faced with unforeseen budget constraints that might reduce the number of events we can continue to offer. To maintain the current level of activity and to ensure that our gifted students may continue to perform before the public during their years of study at the Faculty, we seek your support.

While unrestricted gifts permit the greatest flexibility, you may direct your contribution to be used for a specific purpose. Please send your cheque, payable to the University of Toronto, to the *FACULTY OF MUSIC*, 80 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, M5S 1A1. Include your full name and mailing address for income tax receipt purposes. All gifts to the Faculty of Music are tax deductible.

Gustav Ciamaga, Dean

NEXT OPERA EVENT: Canadian premiere of
Vaughan Williams' "FALSTAFF" opera

SIR JOHN IN LOVE

Friday, March 2; Sunday, March 4 (matinee); Tuesday, March 6;
Thursday, March 8; Saturday, March 10, 1984

(Evenings at 8:00 p.m., Sunday matinee at 2:30 p.m., MacMillan Theatre)
Box Office opens February 6, 1984

NEXT EVENT:

U of T Jazz Ensemble, Directors: Phil Nimmons and Dave Elliott, 8:00 p.m.,
December 10, 1983, MacMillan Theatre.